

THE PUBLIC FORUM

ANSWERING A FRIEND. — It is

with humor that I read a letter signed "A Friend," in which he criticizes Thomas LeVish for his misunderstanding of the Bible. From the above statement I take it for granted that one signed "A Friend" does understand the bible. If this be the case, then our friend is the greatest curiosity yet discovered by man. He must be an intellectual giant. How can a man understand a book that contradicts itself about every other sentence? From the very beginning we are told that God put two great lights in the heavens, the greater light to rule the day, the lesser to rule the night. Nevertheless, the bible lays claim to three days and nights before the great lights were made. The lights referred to are the sun and moon. And we as children learned that the moon is not a light after all, but a great dead planet that casts off the sun's reflection. If God had any message for man he would not entrust it to the memories of illiterate fishermen, barbarous monks and the like. God's message to man cannot be bound between the covers of a book. Nor will it cease to be spoken as long as man is on earth. It is a message of progress, a call to greater things. And mankind will never climb a height so high that the voice will not be heard calling still greater heights. The bible gives evidence of being a record of thoughts of many men at different times. It is a history of the experience of a race of men through many years, and naturally contains many conflicting statements, although having one general trend, which takes its character from the ideals of that race of men. As the bible pretends to be the word of God and is not, it needs defenders and the defenders will be kept busily employed through the years to come or until the object of their defense shall have been recognized by all men for what it is—a

human document full of human contradiction and human errors. — A Pressman.

MORMONS AND MORMONS.—

Many a man who could swim some in shallow water has floundered and gone to the bottom when he got beyond the ropes, and in his letter entitled "Getting Rid of the Fallen Women," in answer to Allen Steven's suggestion that "polygamy" might solve the problem, I was sorry to see George V. Wells get entirely out of his element and, by the statement of a mass of absurdities, mostly disproven by government records of twenty to thirty years ago, cast a shadow of doubt as to the veracity of many interesting previous contributions.

To save argument, I offer to send The Day Book for any worthy cause \$100 if Wells will prove such statements as this: "The mass of the people (of Brigham Young's land) were in chains that could only be removed by death, and any attempt to escape from the iron hands of the church fathers generally met with punishment far worse than death."

"The 'mass' of 'Mormon' people never practiced plural marriages when it was permitted (not 'commanded') some seventy years ago. Conditions in Utah were not unlike those that will prevail in Europe after the war. The 'Mormon' believes in pre-existence; that a spirit awaits every body well-born on earth; that this spirit, after its earthly education, will 'graduate' to a greater field of labor. Hence an honor and a duty for every healthy woman to raise a family of morally and physically strong children and for every fit man to assume the responsibility of support. A fair-minded anti-Mormon writer says in effect: 'The good Mormon never cohabits with his wife for base passion, but only to exercise the creative function.' The essence of the practice, as in the monogamous marriages of today, was 'chastity and purity,' and